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SPECIAL REPORT

THE LEFTWARD TREND IN GHANA

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THE LEFTWARD TREND IN GHANA

Recent developments in Ghana, climaxed by the abortive 2 January attempt on President Nkrumah's life, are accelerating the country's long-prevailing leftward trend. A referendum to be held from 24 to 31 January will formally convert Ghana into a one-party state and will provide a constitutional base for a pervasive party totalitarianism consciously modeled on that of Communist countries. A coterie of extremists, including doctrinaire pro-Communists who have increasingly gained Nkrumah's ear, already is agitating for a thorough purge of all remaining moderate elements. At the same time, Nkrumah is continuing to broaden his direct involvement with the Communist world--now even publicly mouthing its idiom--and to deflect Ghana even further from its once exclusively Western orientation. Barring a successful coup against his regime, it will probably be increasingly difficult for the West to maintain an effective presence in Ghana.

Nkrumah's Personal Dynamic

At least the pace of Ghana's leftward movement appears directly affected by the consuming ambition of the "Osagyefo" (victorious leader) to be head man in a politically united Africa and a recognized world leader. In this quest Nkrumah has encountered a long succession of unsettling frustrations which he believes to be the work of Western "neocolonialists." Indeed, he has increasingly come to think that the West is so implacably hostile to his aspirations that it is constantly conspiring to bring about his physical liquidation. He sees the US as the chief villain in this fancied conspiracy against him.

Communist countries, on the other hand, he regards as dependable allies and reliable sources

of support for his grand design. He has, moreover, been flattered and pleased by the many attentions of these countries, whose short-term aims, at least, are well served by Nkrumah's militant nationalist line and



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increasing willingness to propagate Marxist-Leninist analysis at home and abroad.

A vain, egocentric man fired by a Messianic drive, Nkrumah has long been dedicated to his vision of African primacy. Since he led Ghana to freedom, thereby touching off the Black African independence deluge, this dream has been the key consideration in determining virtually all his policies and actions, internal as well as external. In its pursuit, he has expended significant amounts of Ghana's financial resources and human energies.

These exertions have created an extensive and many-faceted operation, in some respects surpassing Nasir's, for promoting his own special brand of militant pan-Africanism. So far, however, they have not brought Nkrumah visibly closer to his goal. Indeed, his incessant meddling throughout the continent and the subversive activities of his Bureau of African Affairs have alienated most established leaders and resulted in his near isolation from the present mainstream of intra-African politics.

Growth of Authoritarianism

Nkrumah began to dismantle the legal restraints on his authority and to stifle the democratic practices inherited from Britain immediately after Ghana attained independence in March 1957.

He soon negated "entrenched" constitutional clauses, strengthened the central government, and destroyed the essentially tribal power base of his principal political opponents. Under various pressures, including the enactment in 1958 of a preventive detention law authorizing the lengthy incarceration of "security risks," without trial, the parliamentary strength of the elements which constituted the opposition United Party (UP) steadily dwindled. At independence, these elements held over 30 seats; today, on the eve of the UP's extinction as a legal party, they retain eight.

Nkrumah also began tampering early in the game with such British-nurtured institutions as the independent judiciary and civil service. Within his own regime, he perfected a technique of cutting down all potential rivals before they could hope to challenge him. By 1962 he had demonstrated conclusively that no other political figure, not even erstwhile "comrades-in-arms" in the drive to independence, had a sufficiently strong private power base to assure a position in his own right. Today, to a greater extent than ever, all who serve the regime, including party stalwarts, are clearly dependent on the grace and favor of Kwame Nkrumah.

Along the way Nkrumah has permitted no new general election to the national legislature. In 1960, however, he was himself

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elected to the presidency by an overwhelming popular majority which also endorsed a new republican constitution. This instrument, tailored to Nkrumah's requirements by his pro-Communist British adviser Geoffrey Bing, establishes the unequivocal supremacy of the chief executive. After the pending referendum, it will do the same for the Convention People's Party (CPP), of which Nkrumah is "Life Chairman" and general secretary.

Nkrumah's growing authoritarianism and the increasingly ruthless manner of its exercise in recent years, notably after the abortive attempt to assassinate him in 1962, have progressively alienated important elements of Ghanaian society. Among these elements--the most Western-oriented in Ghana--are many civil servants, university students and teachers, middle-class businessmen, and at least some professional army officers and police officials. However, they are unorganized and demoralized.

Even among the largely uneducated masses, on whom Nkrumah has based his movement from its inception in 1949, he has certainly lost some of his popularity. This is attributable mainly to the austerity measures imposed since 1961 under the growing financial stress created in part by the Osagyefo's extravagant economic and foreign programs. These measures, which were strengthened significantly in the budget adopted last fall,

are pinching even the humblest Ghanaians, who are more involved in the money economy than are most of their counterparts elsewhere in Black Africa.

The Regime's
Leftward Evolution

Nkrumah's increasingly exhibited sense of kinship with the Communist world and his decision to embrace formally its central political feature are products of experiences and events dating at least from his student days in the US and UK. In his autobiography, published in 1957, he openly acknowledged being influenced during those formative years by the writings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, as well as by contacts with practicing American and British Communists. He proclaimed himself a "Christian Marxist Socialist"--an anomaly to which he probably still subscribes. A Marxist-oriented circle has existed within the CPP from its earliest days.

Nevertheless, the regime actually did not begin to acquire a heavy ideological cast until around the time of Ghana's changeover to a republic in July 1960. Nkrumah used that occasion to replace some of his older and more conservative associates with younger party men apparently selected largely for their enthusiasm for "socialism." Coincidentally, the Nkrumah regime began in earnest to forge an extensive pattern of direct relationships with Communist countries and to reinforce existing

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ties with various international Communist front organizations, above all the WFTU.

At first, prominent CPP "old guardsmen" attempted to stem the developing leftward tide. A year later, however, they were purged or silenced following a period of strikes triggered by the imposition of new tax and forced-savings schemes. After the 1962 CPP congress, which adopted a "Work and Happiness" program billed as a "blueprint for socialism," Nkrumah's attachment to the new course was unmistakably clear. This has also been reflected in his increasing use of leftists to manage the CPP's expanding national apparatus.

Factors in
Nkrumah's Frustrations

Probably no one factor has contributed more to Nkrumah's growing sense of frustration than has the Congo episode, which largely triggered and is still fueling his deep estrangement from the West. He early became convinced that Western financial interests in general and the US in particular were responsible for the collapse of the regime of his protégé, Patrice Lumumba. In December 1960, after the successor regime expelled Nkrumah's representative from Leopoldville and a moderate Congolese delegation was seated in the UN over Ghana's protests, Ghanaian media launched their first sustained anti-US propaganda campaign. In a November 1963 speech before a con-

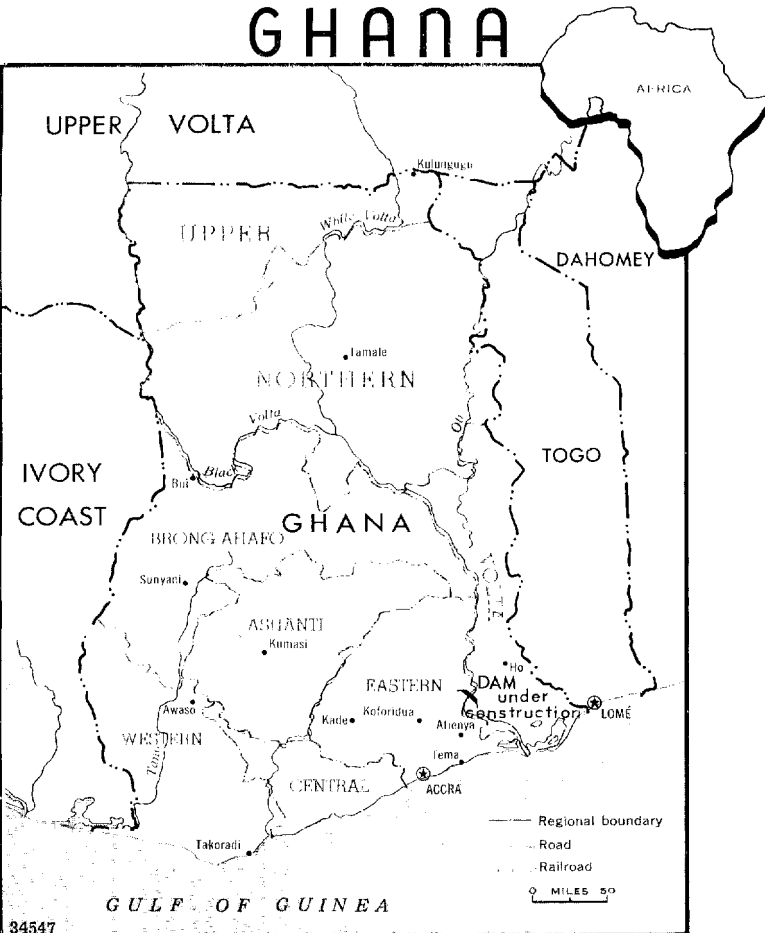
ference of African journalists in Accra Nkrumah bluntly depicted the Congo as a land being despoiled by "American and Belgian capitalists" ruling through "neocolonialist puppets."

The impact on Nkrumah of his failure in the Congo has been all the greater because of a conviction he apparently developed on the eve of that country's independence in June 1960 that the Lumumba regime was prepared to support his project for African unity. Moreover, this frustration came at a time when he was already having large doubts that Ghana's "union" with Guinea, proclaimed with much fanfare in 1958, would ever become viable. Also by 1960, Nkrumah was feeling himself under greater time pressure, mainly because of the emergence of his giant neighbor, Nigeria, as a rival for African leadership.

At home Nkrumah's pre-disposition toward radical solutions and preference for leftist advisers were sharpened first by the strikes of 1961, and then by his first narrow escape from assassination--at Kulungugu in August 1962--and the ensuing political bombings in Accra. The latter series of events, particularly, had traumatic effects on him. He hardly ventured from his heavily fortified Flagstaff House residence for months. Concluding quickly that, somehow, the West must have been behind the plot, his antagonism toward the West deepened into pathological suspicions and fears which almost certainly have been

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January, Nkrumah demanded the removal of two US Embassy officers who he had apparently been persuaded to believe were subversive agents in league with his domestic enemies.

Nkrumah's Ideological Institute

Much of the regime's acquired ideological underpinning, called "Nkrumaism" and designed above all to glorify the Osagyefo, has been developed locally at a special training school opened near Accra in 1961. Now officially styled the "Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute," its mission is to indoctrinate selected officials of the CPP and the party's "integral wings"--the mass movements for labor, youth, farmers, and other groups. It also caters to a limited number of Nkrumah-oriented "freedom fighters" from other African countries.

The director is a veteran Ghanaian pro-Communist, Kodwo Addison, and currently three of seven "resident" faculty members are nationals of Eastern European Communist countries. A fourth is believed to be a Communist of American origin. The institute can handle about 100 students at a time and is being expanded.

Much of the curriculum is based solidly on orthodox Communist ideology. The syllabus on political science, for example, incorporates verbatim large segments of Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, the basic ideological text published by

intensified by the 2 January incident.

In late 1962 these came through clearly in a massive new surge of anti-Western attacks in the leftist-managed party press, continuing almost without letup until well into 1963. All major Western governments were in turn accused of complicity in the Kulungugu affair, but the main brunt of the sustained campaign was directed against the US and various of its agencies. For a time last

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the Soviet Communist Party in 1959. Nevertheless, the overall thrust of the program, which Addison said in 1962 would include training in guerrilla warfare, remains adulation of Nkrumah and support for his practical regional objectives. One Ghanaian staffer recently characterized Nkrumaism in a lecture as the variant of Marxism-Leninism adapted to Africa and thus the regional counterpart to Maoism and Titoism.

More Communist Ideology

Although Nkrumah remains even today essentially a pragmatist interested in specific political goals, he has for some time now made it evident that, in principle at least, he regards "scientific socialism" as the only bona fide basis of socialist faith. Beginning about last spring, he has permitted the doctrinaire pro-Communists in his regime to propagate Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy openly and with increasing intensity.

Speaking mainly through The Spark, a weekly newspaper circulated around Africa by the Bureau of African Affairs, these elements have challenged the concept of "African Socialism" as distinguished from Marxism-Leninism and have insisted that the class struggle as defined in Marxist dogma is applicable to Africa--a position denied in the past by Nkrumah and other Afro-Marxists. The general effect of their effort has been to nudge Nkrumaism ever closer to

the common bedrock of faith shared throughout the Communist world.

By November Nkrumah himself began speaking in ever more extremist terms. The US Embassy characterized his speech to the journalists as perhaps his most extreme anticapitalist and revolutionary performance. It included his first known specific use of such phrases as "class interests" and "class politics." He gave ample evidence that, in common with other spokesmen for what he obviously regards as the international "socialist" fraternity, he views the US as the citadel of reactionary opposition to progressive forces everywhere. Subsequently, he has increasingly tended to mouth the Communist-derived jargon appearing continually in The Spark. Public criticism of Communist countries, which as recently as last spring was still occasionally tolerated in the controlled press, now is apparently forbidden, even under provocative circumstances such as those surrounding the student demonstrations in Moscow last December.

Nkrumah deplores the quarrel between the USSR and Communist China and has gratuitously attempted to present himself as a mediator. In general he has avoided taking sides, although an authoritative editorial occasioned by Chou En-lai's visit to Accra this week seems to reflect views nearer to the Soviet than to the Chinese position. There was a conscious attempt, however, to minimize, as mere matters of

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"approach," ideological differences with the visitors.

Recent Leftward Stimuli

Immediately behind Nkrumah's latest slide to the left lie fresh defeats and vexations beginning at the African "summit" conference in Addis Ababa last May. Not only did he fail there to sell his highly touted project for early "continental union" to his fellow African leaders, but Ghana ended up being excluded from the important new African Liberation Committee.

Last fall new Nkrumah initiatives to obtain a major voice in the UN military operation in the Congo and to promote an all-African "defense command" also failed. Frenetic efforts to play a prominent role in mediating the Algerian-Moroccan border dispute also proved futile. Again, Nkrumah has mostly blamed the West, and particularly the US, for these setbacks.

Meanwhile despite his earlier acquisition of almost \$200 million worth of credits from Communist countries and US loan commitments of \$147 million for Ghana's priority Volta hydroelectric-aluminum project, economic troubles are also crowding in on the Oasgyefo. Depressed prices for cocoa--Ghana's chief export--over several years, combined with heavy development expenditures and extravagances, have

shrunk foreign exchange reserves dramatically. From over \$500 million at independence they had dwindled to approximately \$140 million by last November. In addition, there have been successive large budget deficits, that for 1963 alone amounting to about \$120 million.

The financial crisis promises to intensify in the years immediately ahead when the government will be required to honor a sharply rising schedule of payment obligations. Moreover, the ambitious new Seven-Year Development Plan, to be inaugurated soon, seems doomed from the outset, inasmuch as the foreign private capital upon which its success essentially depends will almost certainly not be attracted to Ghana under present circumstances. In the past, Nkrumah has made periodic attempts to build confidence among potential investors, but these are vitiated by the anticapitalist climate he is personally encouraging.

Nkrumah's exasperation over these economic problems was aggravated last fall by an outburst of sharp criticism of regime policies in Parliament. Several CPP members were prominent among these attackers--a most uncommon phenomenon. About the same time, some of Nkrumah's own ministers, along with other high government officials, were reported making similarly caustic remarks in private about current policies.

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Economic Relations With
Communist Countries

To a considerable extent Nkrumah is pinning his hopes for economic salvation on expanded relations, especially in the trade field, with Communist countries. Imports from this source are a major means of conserving hard-currency reserves. As a result, Ghana's trade with the Communist world, which in 1957 accounted for only about 3 percent of its total foreign trade value, has in recent years risen steadily to a new high in 1963 of approximately 11 percent.

In the process, the Communist countries as a group for the first time last year purchased more of Ghana's cocoa than did the US, still the largest single buyer. A further expansion of this trade will probably occur this year, especially as the Communists are showing some disposition to revise their payments agreements in Ghana's favor.

At the same time, the way is now opening for more rapid implementation of the extensive credits advanced by the Communist countries in 1960 and 1961. Again, the latter have recently gone to considerable lengths to accommodate Ghanaian complaints. By 1962 these had

reached the point where Nkrumah has ordered an official review. Criticisms are voiced less openly since Moscow agreed last March to help Ghana with the local costs connected with Soviet projects. Ghana has obtained credits from two Western sources to defray local costs of certain other Communist projects.

Warning Signs

At least by November it was becoming evident, even apart from Nkrumah's fire-breathing speech to the journalists, that a new move to the left was under way in Ghana. Legislation to strengthen further the preventive detention act and to unify and place under the direct control of the President the various services concerned with political security and intelligence was suddenly pushed through the National Assembly.

More significantly, Nkrumah began openly to employ his extremist advisers--previously confined mainly to managing the information media, the Bureau of African Affairs, and national party machinery--to help establish policy lines in such areas as labor and education. Nkrumah installed one of them, the fanatical pro-Communist editor of The Spark, Kofi Batsa, as secretary general of the now Ghana-dominated Pan-African Union of Journalists.

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SELECTED AGREEMENTS IN FORCE BETWEEN GHANA AND COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

COMMUNIST COUNTRY	DATE EXTENDED	AMOUNT OF CREDIT	SELECTED PROJECTS	STATUS OF PROJECT	Number of Economic Technicians Communist Country has in Ghana (end of 1963)	Number of Ghanaian Academic Students in Communist Country (mid 1963)	DATE OF BASIC TRADE AGREEMENT
USSR	August 1960 November 1961	\$40,000,000 \$42,000,000	Geological Survey Hydroelectric power plant, Bul Fur State Farm Agricultural technicians' school Development of fishing industry Gold refinery Prefabricated panel factory Textile mill	- In progress - under survey - in progress - unknown - in progress - in progress - under const. - unknown	222	520	4 November 1961
	August 1960- March 1961	\$13,400,000	Purchase of IL-18 aircraft	- completed			
BULGARIA	Originally extended October 1961; revised March 1963	\$ 5,600,000	Complete plants Education of Ghanaian specialists in Bulgaria	-	-	30	5 October 1961
CZECHO- SLOVAKIA	May 1961	\$14,000,000	Sugar mill	- unknown	22	75	16 October 1961
	October 1961	\$10,600,000	Tire factory Shoe factories Leather tannery Hydroelectric studies Aluminum cutlery factory	- survey completed - under const. - equipment sent - in progress - unknown			
EAST GERMANY	May 1961	\$ 1,600,000	Equipment for printing plant Oil mills	- In progress - largely comp.	5	-	19 October 1961
HUNGARY	April 1961	\$ 4,600,000	Pharmaceutical factory	- under const.	9	20	23 October 1961
	October 1961	\$ 7,000,000	Light bulb factory Hydroelectric survey	- under const. - in progress			
POLAND	April 1961	\$12,600,000	Sugar refinery	- under survey	54	-	26 October 1961
	December 1961	\$14,000,000	Hand tool factory Farm implement factory Cement plant Furniture factory Iron ore mining plant	- under survey - under survey - under survey - under survey - under survey			
RUMANIA	September 1961	\$ 8,400,000	Refrigerators, installation & equip Chemical plants Knitwear factory Distillery Geological exploration for oil	- unknown - unknown - unknown - unknown - in progress	-	5	30 September 1961
COMMUNIST CHINA	August 1961	\$19,600,000	Cotton processing plants Pencil factory Earthenware factory Rice cultivation Irrigation project	- surveyed - prelim. survey - unknown - unknown - unknown	-	5	18 August 1961
GRAND TOTAL		\$193,300,000			312	655	

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Parallel signs of new involvement with the USSR in critical areas also began to appear. Soviet security agents were again reported serving as advisers at Flagstaff House as they had for several months after the Kulungugu incident. Ghana's intelligence chiefs said that they had recently been forced to send trainees to Moscow. Overshadowing these developments, however, were indications that major new military arrangements between Ghana and the Soviet Union were in the works.

In late October a Soviet delegation reportedly composed of high-ranking military officers paid a brief, surreptitious visit to Accra. Intermittent military discussions had been held between the two countries since late 1960, when Moscow first offered broad assistance in this field. The only tangible results up to this time, however, have been two small arms shipments to Ghana and a 1961 program for training Ghanaian cadets in the USSR which had to be curtailed because Nkrumah was unable to furnish sufficiently qualified candidates. Ghana's British-oriented professional military leaders are generally opposed to the acceptance of Communist military aid.

Army. He probably considers the existing units of his armed forces politically unreliable because they have been trained by Britain and Canada. He may also calculate that a larger military establishment will boost his sagging prestige in Africa and give him greater leverage with embattled nationalists in the southern part of the continent.

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The Referendum

Notwithstanding the trend clearly under way, there was no evidence that Nkrumah was planning the early formal conversion of Ghana into a one-party state until early December, when three of his former associates who had been detained for alleged complicity in the Kulungugu incident were acquitted on treason charges. Nkrumah was unable to produce any solid evidence against them, but the verdict apparently took the Osagyefo by surprise, judging from the violence of his reaction.

Publicly he took the position that his quarrel was not with the decision but with Chief Justice Korsah's failure to notify him of its nature before it was announced. This, he charged, made it impossible for

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authorities to safeguard public order. In short order, Korsah was demoted and retired, and the CPP central committee, the cabinet, and the National Assembly were summoned into special sessions. On 23 December Parliament enacted legislation enabling the President to void any decisions of the special court--a step he immediately took with respect to the 9 December verdict. The three suspects are being kept in prison under the preventive detention law.

Further and more drastic measures were foreshadowed by a loud new press campaign in which the leftists portrayed the acquittal as fresh evidence of the "conspiracy" against Ghana and demanded strong new action to safeguard "the people's revolution." The main focus was on the need to replace "treacherous" judges with ones "honestly devoted to the cause of socialism." However, a build-up began for a purge of all "counterrevolutionary" and "opportunistic" elements in the government and CPP, with specific references to Parliament and the civil, foreign, and security services as well as to the judiciary.

In this atmosphere, Nkrumah announced on 31 December the forthcoming referendum on two proposed constitutional amendments. These will render the judiciary completely subservient

to the President and enshrine the CPP as Ghana's "only national party." The latter proposition also officially defines the CPP as "the vanguard of the people" and the "leading core of all organizations"--phrases employed in the Soviet constitution in regard to the Communist Party. Stimulated still further by the new attempt on Nkrumah's life on 2 January, the regime's propaganda mill is calling for a "100-percent" affirmative vote.

Present Status

Right now Nkrumah appears a badly frightened man whose behavior in the immediate future is likely to be even more erratic and unpredictable than usual; it may even be affected by superstitious considerations. His initial reaction to the latest attempt to kill him has been to start an extensive internal shakeup which so far has mainly affected the police but may soon extend to top-level regime personalities.

Last week he purged virtually the entire top command of the British-trained police after his captured assailant reportedly implicated the deputy commissioner. The police have also been disarmed and their armories placed under army control. For the moment, a staunchly Western-oriented official has been installed as acting police commissioner.

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The US Embassy believes that these precipitate actions have for the moment placed the regime in greater jeopardy from a coup than it has ever been before, but that Nkrumah can probably ride out the critical period. While moderate elements in the government have been badly shaken by recent events, the army support essential for any successful move against Nkrumah does not seem to be in sight.

Outlook

Assuming Nkrumah stays in power, further fundamental changes in the political system along the lines advocated by the pro-Communists can probably be anticipated. Once the CPP's legal monopoly over politics is established, he probably will proceed to make political loyalty the prerequisite for employment in the security services, the civil service, the education system, and other professional areas. For some time, however, the CPP will continue to lack sufficient machinery and efficiency to enforce its "leading core" role everywhere.

Within the regime, the field now seems to be wide open for the extremists, whose influence over Nkrumah is likely to continue to increase as long as they do not overplay their hand. The result appears certain to be a further progressive Commu-

nist penetration of Ghanaian political life through such vehicles as the Ideological Institute and perhaps eventually the entire educational system. Nevertheless, Nkrumah at this point probably retains sufficient perspective to be wary of any attempt on the part of his pro-Communist associates to create an independent power base. Similarly, he seems in no immediate danger of losing his essential freedom of action to Moscow or Peiping, although his ties with the Communist world will undoubtedly grow. He seems particularly receptive to increased Communist collaboration in his African ventures.

For the West, prospects in Ghana are thus dismal at present. New diatribes against the US and other Western governments, including accusations of direct complicity in the latest assassination attempt, may be launched soon. If a new anti-Western vendetta does develop, it may this time involve some reduction of the Western presence. The US Peace Corps could be an early victim of any such move. In any event, it will probably be increasingly difficult for private foreign interests, especially those involved in commercial activities, to function profitably, and Nkrumah may in time even proceed against established Western-owned enterprises.

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